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HOW TO AVOID COLDS

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New York, N. Y.

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We catch cold from two causes: first, by conduction; second, by evaporation. Immovable air is a poor conductor of heat, therefore people exposed to very cold weather, such as farmers, sailors, coachmen, chauffeurs, etc., carry sheets of paper between the layers of their clothing. Fur is worn for a similar reason. In addition to the immovable air, the outside covering should be a poor heat conductor. Immovable air in the outside clothing serves this purpose. Such a layer of immovable air lies between the skin and underwear, another between the underwear and shirt, another between the shirt and vest, and so on from layer to layer. Two pairs of thin cotton stockings are, for this reason, warmer than one pair of woolen stockings. For this reason, also, a porous woolen glove is warmer than a tight-fitting leather glove. Precisely as clothing in winter should prevent an undue loss of heat from the skin, so in summer it should not interfere with the dissipation of heat. The selection of clothing should depend largely on the occupation, condition of health, and the requirements of age. Clothing may be a menace as well as a blessing.

Sudden changes of the temperature of the air cause colds, frequently. A sudden cooling of the body surface predisposes to infectious diseases in general. In the tropical regions, the white population is more subject to disease because it is not inured to the sudden changes of temperature from the intense heat of the daytime to the cold of the night. Sudden changes of body temperature may cause the catching of a cold, as from automobile riding in winter, or exposure to a drenching rain, or submersion in cold water, or going from an overheated room, when perspiring, into a cooler atmosphere. Children, when smothered with blankets or feather beds, will become restless, throw off their coverings and expose themselves. For this reason, the air of sleeping rooms should not be too hot, nor is it wise to use too much covering. Old fashioned people cannot be induced to keep the windows open at night, and many a case of pneumonia is caused in just this way. Colds are very apt to follow a drinking bout and exposure to cold weather and wet.

Draughts, or currents of air differing from the surrounding air in velocity and temperature, cause a local or general chill, with a contraction of the superficial blood and lymph vessels and a resulting

congestion of the inner organs. It is the purpose of the modern system of ventilation to purify the air without causing perceptible draughty air currents.

Worry and fatigue are frequent precursors of a cold, worry causes loss of sleep and indigestion, followed by a diminution of nerve power, and a relaxation of the vasomotor system, with a consequent loss of resistance to infection. Fatigue is the outward and visible sign of an inward active poison or trauma, and that toxemia means a lessened resistance to colds as well as to many other morbid invasions.

Immoderate eating and drinking are usually accompanied by late hours, resulting in congestion, autotoxemia, and loss of nerve force; the mucosa relax and weep, and the symptoms of a cold follow.

What the connection is between colds and serious disease, both infectious and non-infectious, and what part the infectious organisms play in the causation of colds is still a mooted and hotly discussed question. Pneumonia often follows a cold. Tuberculosis is more often fatal in the spring, when rapid changes of temperature and moisture occur. Diphtheria and croup may follow a sudden cold wave. Cholera infantum and the cholera nostras of adults sometimes directly follow the drinking of iced water by overworked and perspiring individuals. It cannot be denied that the presence of specific infectious organisms is necessary to cause any specific disease. The relationship may be well accounted for by the fact that the mucous membranes of the nose, mouth and throat constantly harbor some of these germs; but as long as these mucous membranes are in their normal healthy condition,—that is, covered with their epithelia—the germs cannot enter the tissues and the circulation. A catarrh removes this protecting mucous membrane and the epithelia are swept away by the fluid. When this occurs, the living enemies, the micro-organisms, get their chance to do harmful work. As long as the mucous membranes are in a healthy condition, our noses may be full of bacilli, pneumococci, meningococci, the cocci of rheumatism, the streptococci of scarlet fever, and so on, and yet these germs can do no harm, but let there be a trauma of any kind, a slight sore or wound, and there is immediately a breach in the wall, and in rush the infecting organisms.

Colds, in the majority of cases, are house-born infections, and although from an economic standpoint they cost the community more than pneumonia, influenza and diphtheria combined, yet little or no precautions are taken to prevent their spread. That colds can be and are transmitted from one person to another by the discharges is denied by few, if any.

To prevent the "catching of colds," the general health should be

maintained. The skin surface, which is softened and its general tone lowered by a constant warm temperature of the room, by feather beds and by warm bathing, should be strengthened and hardened by cool air to which the body is gradually habituated. Cold water is an excellent protector. A good way to become accustomed to the cold is to sponge the whole body from head to toes with a towel wrung out of cold water, and then to rub the whole body dry and warm with a coarse towel, once daily. Those who enjoy the luxury of a bath tub may squeeze a wet sponge over their shoulders and then take the dry rub. A shower bath is still more convenient. In the beginning, the cold water treatment should last only a few seconds, and then later, as the body becomes accustomed to it, the time can be prolonged to a minute or two. It is easier to begin this treatment in the summer time and then continue it through the winter. Those of a stronger constitution may begin by taking a cold plunge. Infants should not be subjected to this heroic treatment because their reflexes are not sufficiently developed to give the reaction which is desirable. As a result of this cold water treatment, the individual feels a vigor and a glow obtainable in no other way. Wherever the cold water is not applicable, one part of alcohol with two parts of water, cold or tepid, preferably cold, acts well. These measures of hardening should not be applied in a cold room, and open windows should be closed temporarily. Friction should be applied to the body surface during the wash to generate the reaction. In the case of weak and debilitated persons, cold washing should not be practiced, because the cold water will not call forth a reaction. The feeling of warmth and well-being which follows the cold water treatment proves the presence of a reaction. Those suffering with a poor circulation, as evidenced by cold and wet feet, and anemics, can be helped considerably by friction with a dry towel and the wearing of stockings in bed. Another remedy is washing the feet and legs, up to the knees, with cold water followed by a brisk rubbing. This treatment is better than the use of hot water bottles or any other application of external heat. A hot foot bath with or without mustard followed by a dry rub is also helpful to improve the circulation. Colds may result from excessive perspiration of the feet. For this, a ten per cent alcoholic solution of formaldehyd is excellent, accompanied by placing into the stocking for daily wear a dusting powder consisting of salicylic acid, three parts; bismuth subgallate and talcum, each fifty parts.

The mucous membranes of the respiratory and digestive organs should be kept in a healthy condition. The avoidance of improper food and excessive drinking and of exposure to a sudden cold tem-

perature is necessary. The nose and throat may harbor many pathological conditions or growths, either congenital or acquired, such as deviated nasal septa, polypi, or adenoids. These morbid conditions cause congestion and the accumulation of mucus and pus, favoring the catching of colds. In the way of prophylaxis, all nasal deformities and morbid conditions should be corrected. Nasal irrigations with one or two drachms of a warm saline solution twice daily will help. A word of warning is timely here in regard to the use of injections, the snuffing of solutions and the nasal douche. These should be used with the utmost caution, if at all, because of the danger of forcing the infection into the ears through the Eustachian canals.

Many investigators lay all blame as to the causation of catching cold at the feet of micro-organisms; they urge the use of vaccines. The actual therapeutic value of these vaccines is still an undecided question and has proved valueless in the hands of many.

Other influences in the causation of colds are certain varieties of pollen (hay-fever), chemical irritants, as chlorine or bromine gas, and vasomotor conditions. All these require different methods of prevention or cure, according to their respective natures.

The question of the prophylaxis of colds is a many-sided one, but is mainly a matter of social interest and includes such matters as the proper construction of dwellings, factories, assembly halls, churches, and schools, and the proper method of their ventilation. Those afflicted with colds should not kiss any one, nor should they cough, sneeze, or spit indiscriminately, so as to spread the infection.

In the first stage of a cold, the patient should be put to bed with an ice bag to the head and a hot water bag to the feet. Sweating is encouraged by the taking of hot drinks, water, lemonade, milk, or whiskey, and by hot bathing. Hot foot baths, with or without mustard, are helpful. A course of calomel and salts serves to deplete the system. Phenacetine, Dover's powder, aconite, liquor ammoniae acetatis, and teas are all grateful, particularly in the acute stage.

In the second stage, excessive nasal discharge can be stopped by abstinence from drinking, together with forced sweating. An adrenalin spray (1 to 5000) acts well. Hexamethylenamine (urotropin), grains five, three times daily, is advised by many, especially in severe infections. Strychnine sulphate, grains 1-100, is a good tonic. The use of eggs and milk should be forced. It is necessary to keep the patient in bed until the temperature is entirely normal.

Repeated "colds in the head" are usually due to some form of nasal obstruction or irritation. In children, hypertrophied tonsils and adenoids are the offenders; in adults, adenoids, a deflected nasal

septum, or a supersensitive area of the nasal mucous membrane are at the root of the trouble, and relief usually follows their correction by the proper surgical procedure.

In conclusion, to indulge in an Hibernianism, the best way to cure a cold is not to "catch" one; but if we do catch a cold, we should remember that the affection is far from being trivial.

ENTERTAINING HOSPITAL PATIENTS BY MOTION PICTURES

BY ERNEST A. DENCH

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It must be a trying ordeal for active folks to be bedridden, and consequently shut off from the outside world. No patient feels in a fit condition to undertake the necessary mental work involved in reading; he wants this done for him, and the motion picture ably performs this service. By the photoplay he can be taken through the realms of romance and forget his pains and troubles for the time being.

The Ohio State Hospital at Massillon runs photoplay entertainments in the sick rooms for the patients, and other hospitals are gradually falling into line. These hints may prove of value to the hospital about to inaugurate such plays. The first item of importance is the projection machine, the cost of which ranges from \$250 to \$300. The authorities in various parts of the country insist upon the projection machine being enclosed in a fireproof booth, for if there is an outbreak of fire it cannot possibly spread further. Here an expense of \$65 is involved. This booth, made of galvanized iron, gives the operator plenty of room in which to work, and being shipped in parts, the whole is easily set up with nuts and bolts.

Carbons are necessary to run the projector. These cost from \$17 to \$44, although prices vary according to market conditions.

The next important link is the screen. Formerly a tablecloth or bed sheet was used, but science has now brought out many different screens, the best costing about one dollar and a half a foot.

Without music, motion pictures are divested of much of their charm, and while an orchestra of several pieces is best, one can get along satisfactorily with a piano.

If there is a man on the staff of employees who is well versed in electricity, he could easily become an expert operator. If he is the